

## **ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A method of installing a network device in a packet-based data communication network and checking the authenticity of the installation includes: (a) communicating identification information of the device to a management system; (b) installing the device; (c) obtaining from a protocol address administrator a protocol address for the device; (d) sending a communication from the device to the management system; (e) conducting a key agreement protocol exchange between the device and the management system to establish a set of encryption keys; (f) using the set of encryption keys to provide mutual authentication by the device and the management system; (g) associating, within the management system, the time of the communication in step (d) with the identification information and the protocol address of the device; and (h) communicating from the management system to the administrator a message including the identification information, the protocol address and the time.